

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANAMA 00314 071713Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4193

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 314

STADIS////////////////////

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : PFOR, BA

SUBJECT : MIDEASTFOR TALKS

1. FOLLOWING ARE NUMBER OF FACTORS WHICH YOU MAY WISH
TO CONSIDER AS YOU DEVELOP DEPARTMENT'S FUTURE APPROACH
TO MIDEASTFOR TALKS AND, MORE IMMEDIATELY, CONTENT OF
ANY MESSAGE TO GOB FOLLOWING MEETING WITH SECRETARY IN
RIYADH.

2. ACCORDING ADMIRAL CROWE, PENTAGON OFFICIALS INCREASINGLY
CONCERNED THAT DEPT HAS YET TO CIRCULARIZE SELECTED POSTS FOR
THEIR JUDGMENTS ON POSSIBILITIES OF EXPANDING PORT VISITS
BY MIDEASTFOR SHIPS. THEIR CONCERN IS SHARED BY CROWE WHO IS
APPREHENSIVE THAT WE NOT GET INTO POSITION OF GIVING UP TOO
MUCH IN-PORT TIME HERE BEFORE WE HAVE REASONABLE EXPECTATION
OF MAKING IT UP ELSEWHERE. THOUGH I DO NOT FEEL QUITE THE SAME
SENSE OF URGENCY, SINCE TALKS HERE STILL IN EARLY STAGES, IT
WILL BE NECESSARY TO HAVE ACCURATE IDEA OF WHAT IS POSSIBLE
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ELSEWHERE BEFORE WE TRY TO NAIL GOB DOWN TO SPECIFICS ON FUTURE
IN-PORT TIME HERE. IF DEPT COULD ASK FOR POSTS' VIEWS TO REACH
DEPT, INFO TO MANAMA, BY, SAY, LAST WEEK OF FEB, THIS OUGHT
TO BE TIME ENOUGH.D

3. HEIR APPARENT/DEFENSE MINISTER SHAIKH HAMAD HAS ASKED
ME WHEN THIS MONTH HE MIGHT EXPECT TO RECEIVE DEFENSE SURVEY

REPORT. I SAID I THOUGHT HE WOULD GET IT THIS MONTH BUT THAT I WOULD CHECK. ONLY REASON NOT TO HAND HIM REPORT SOON, SUITABLY COVERED WITH CAVEATS, IS TO GIVE ME CHANCE TO GO FURTHER WITH FONMIN ON DETAILS OF NEW FORMAT FOR NAVY PRESENCE HERE, WHICH I PLAN TO DO. UNLESS THERE ARE OBJECTIONS OF WHICH I AM UNAWARE, IT MIGHT BE MOST CONVENIENT FOR ME TO GET COPIES OF REPORT IN RIYADH AND GIVE ONE TO HAMAD AT VERY END OF MONTH. PRINCE SULTAN'S VEHEMENT OPPOSITION TO HEAVY ARMS FOR BAHRAIN (JIDDA 587) PROVIDES GOOD BACKING FOR THOSE IN GOB WHO FEEL SIMILARLY AND MAKE IT INCREASINGLY UNLIKELY THAT HAMAD COULD FINANCE SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT EVEN IF WE WERE WILLING TO SELL.

4. MESSAGE TO GOB WHICH I WOULD CONVEY TO GOB AFTER MEETING SECRETARY IN RIYADH SHOULD OF COURSE MENTION MIDEASTFOR, AND OUR DESIRE FOR NEW FORMAT, AT LEAST IN GENERAL TERMS. FAILURE OF ANY MESSAGE FROM NEW ADMINISTRATION TO TOUCH ON THIS, THE MAJOR BILATERAL ISSUE, MIGHT BE TAKEN HERE AS SIGN THAT NEW TEAM NOT INTERESTED IN PRESERVING NAVY PRESENCE HERE, EVEN IN ABBREVIATED FORM WHICH WE ARE NOW EXPLORING. MORE SPECIFIC MESSAGE COULD BE, ON THIS SUBJECT, THE BETTER.

5. FOLLOWING THEMES MIGHT BE WOVEN INTO MESSAGE TO GOB:

-- US VALUES ITS RELATIONS WITH BAHRAIN, WHICH WE CONSIDER ONE OF OUR OLDEST AND BEST FRIENDS IN GULF.

-- PRIVATE AND OFFICIAL AMERICANS HAVE FOR DECADES FOUND WARM WELCOME IN BAHRAIN AND WE ARE PLEASED TO SEE THESE LINKS
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BETWEEN US EXPANDED IN RECENT MONTHS.

-- EXPANSION OF OUR OFFICIAL CONNECTIONS, THROUGH OUR EMBASSY, THE PEACE CORPS, AND AID PROJECTS, HAS BEEN MATCHED IN THE COMMERCIAL SPHERE AS WELL AS HOW AMERICAN BUSINESSES HAVE ESTABLISHED THEMSELVES IN BAHRAIN.

-- BAHRAIN HAS BEEN HELPFUL AND HOSPITABLE HOST TO U.S. NAVY FOR DECADES AND IN SO DOING HAS BEEN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN OUR CONTINUING EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE STABLE AND PEACEFUL WORLD.

-- WE RECOGNIZE, HOWEVER, THAT AS TIMES CHANGE WE MUST OURSELVES ADAPT BY FINDING NEW SOLUTIONS TO CONTINUING PROBLEMS.

-- IN THIS SPIRIT WE ARE WORKING WITH YOU NOW TO ADAPT TO TODAY'S CIRCUMSTANCES THE CONTINUING NEED FOR A U.S. NAVAL PRESENCE IN GULF AND INDIAN OCEAN REGION.

-- WE HAVE BEEN FULLY BRIEFED BY AMB CLUVERIUS ON YOUR CONCERNS AND ON PROGRESS TO DATE OF EXPLORATORY TALKS. WE ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO EARLY SUCCESS OF OUR JOINT EFFORTS TO FIND NEW, MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY FORMAT FOR FUTURE U.S.N. ACCESS TO SOME OF FACILITIES IT NOW ENJOYS IN BAHRAIN.

-- WE BELIEVE GOOD FRIENDS WORKING TOGETHER, WITH MUTUAL RESPECT FOR ONE ANOTHER'S CONCERNS, CAN AND WILL FIND SOLUTION TO SHARED PROBLEMS. WE LOOK FORWARD TO SUCESS IN THIS PRESENT CASE AS WELL AS TO CONTINUING AND DEEPENING OUR TRADITIONALLY EXCELLENT RELATIONS IN ALL FIELDS.
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